

SANDHURST

PREPARED FOR THE WAR OFFICE
BY THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF INFORMATION



THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST

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1961



I

INTRODUCTION TO A TRADITION

In the following pages a brief sketch is given, for those contemplating an Officer's career, of the history, traditions and aims of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and of the life and training of a contemporary Sandhurst Cadet.

Tradition and ceremonial play an essential part on military occasions. Perfection of ceremonial is a visible sign of good discipline, an essential requirement in the profession of arms. Both play their part at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and what comparable institution would be without its ceremonial? Furthermore the tradition of which it forms the outward symbol is a living one, constantly being adapted to meet changing modern conditions, grafting the best of the old on to what is most vital in the new.

Sandhurst is not the place for those seeking a soft option or glamour without responsibility. But for those who are eager both to lead and serve; who are prepared to accept hard work, mental as well as physical, and the exacting training which is the price of leadership; who, above all, are ambitious to have scope for personal initiative, and to play an active and influential part in the modern community — for such a Commission in the Regular Army will offer opportunities hard to equal today; and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst is the gateway to such a career. The modern Regular Officer is, in a very real sense, an ambassador-at-large; he must take great public responsibilities, and not only in the purely military sphere. He must keep himself familiar with current affairs, both at home and abroad, and have something

more than a working knowledge of social conditions and political institutions.

The comprehensive education offered by the R. M. A. S. is a very different thing from the utilitarian training of the war-time Officer Cadet Training Unit – with which it is still sometimes confused. The R. M. A. S. could perhaps be more accurately described as an Army University. The military instruction given caters for the highest requirements of a modern army equipped with every up-to-date scientific and technical device; but this is only a part of the course. A liberal education in the widest sense is offered to the Cadet: the sciences, languages, literature, current affairs are studied.

While at Sandhurst, an Officer Cadet is leading a communal, corporate life, and imbibing the spirit of service and comradeship for which the Army stands. If his latent qualities of leadership are encouraged and developed, so is the team spirit; and at Sandhurst, perhaps more than anywhere else, the future Officer will be first aware of that friendly club atmosphere, intangible yet unmistakable, which will accompany him throughout his subsequent Service career. Facilities are offered for every kind of sport. Few universities could show more varied extra-mural activities, and even fewer could boast that their education is entirely free.

Cadets, who are paid a minimum of 12/- a day on joining, enjoy complete financial independence as well as innumerable free facilities. No demands need be made on parents throughout the course.

II

SANDHURST OLD AND NEW

The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst is an amalgamation of two famous institutions – The Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, known to many generations of Gunner, Sapper and (more recently) Royal Signals Officers as *The Shop*, and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. The first course entered the new joint Academy in 1947; but the plan to combine them had been considered as long ago as 1875, when the House of Commons actually approved amalgamation. For various reasons, however, the decision was revoked and not considered again till 1935. Amalgamation was to have taken place in 1940, but was delayed for seven more years by the war.

The Royal Military Academy, Woolwich

The Shop is the older of the two establishments, having been founded in 1741 by Royal Warrant and situated in Woolwich throughout. During the first twenty years of its existence, life for the Gentleman Cadet was extremely rough, while his studies, to say the least, were haphazard. In 1764 (when we notice a ‘Lieutenant-Fireworker’ on the establishment), under an energetic and idealistic Lieutenant-Governor, studies were first set on an organised basis. From then on conditions rapidly improved. Originally the age of Cadets had varied between 15 and 18; with the rise of the Public Schools this increased in the 1850s to about 19½ or 20. During the same period sports were introduced into the curriculum; the *Silver Bugle*, then first awarded to the best athlete of the year, is still competed for at Sandhurst.

Many generations of distinguished Officers were trained for the Royal Artillery, the Royal Engineers, and (after 1920) for the Royal Signals at *The Shop*. They include such famous names as Gordon, Kitchener, Ironside, Alanbrooke, and – unexpectedly – Louis Napoleon, the Prince Imperial of France, killed in 1879 during the Zulu War. The list of instructors is hardly less distinguished; at one time there were three Fellows of the Royal Society on the Staff, and Michael Faraday was for nineteen years Professor of Chemistry; his famous magnet is exhibited today in the R.M.A.S. Library

Traditions of *The Shop* still live on at Sandhurst. Most of *The Shop's* old trophies and records have found a new home there; carved Rolls of Honour from Woolwich occupy an honoured place on the walls, side by side with those of the former Royal Military College. Even the imposing statues of Queen Victoria and the Prince Imperial, erected at Woolwich, now stand in the grounds at Sandhurst as a memorial of the past.

The R.M.C., Sandhurst

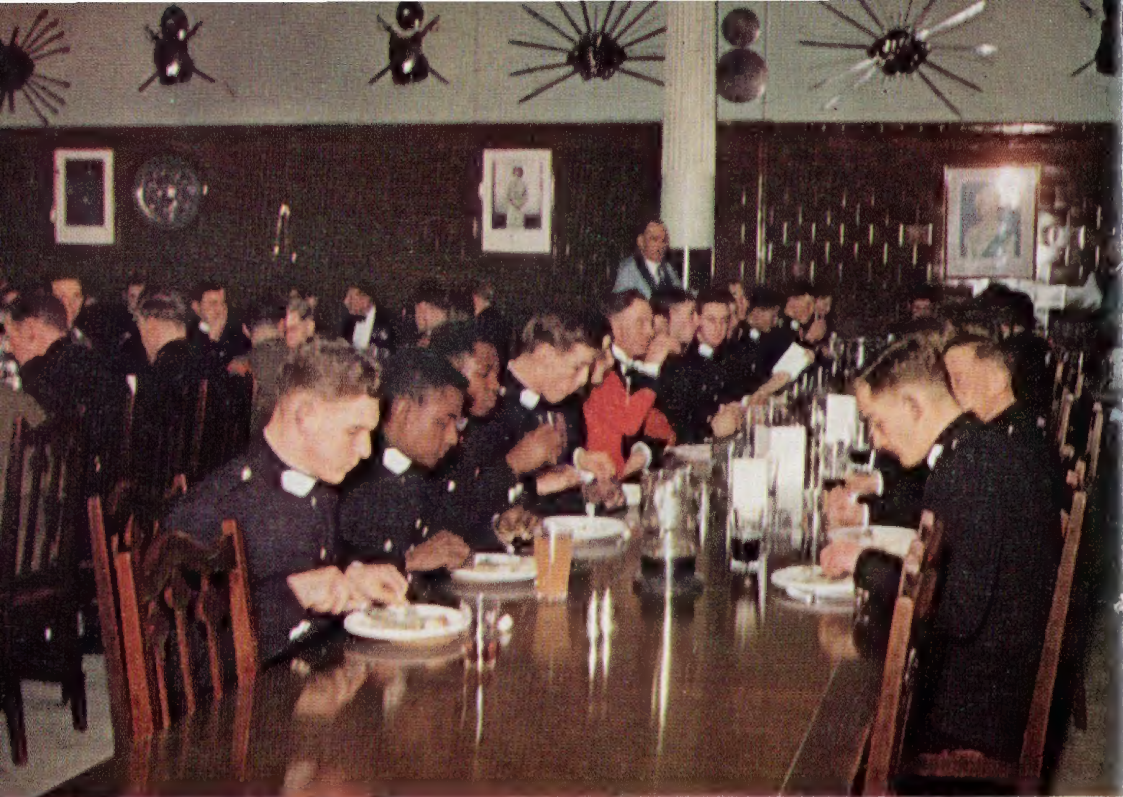
The Royal Military College, Sandhurst – as 'Shop' Officers will tell you with pleasure – is younger than its sister establishment at Woolwich, and had a more chequered career. The Royal Military College was originally founded in 1799 at High Wycombe, not for the training of Officer Cadets, but as an educational establishment for 26 young Army Officers. The creation of a Military College as such was due to Colonel (later Major-General) Gaspard Le Marchant, who was to fall at Salamanca in 1812 while leading the Heavy Brigade. In 1801 Colonel Le Marchant obtained authority to divide the College into two Departments. The senior of these was formed from the already existing Officers' establishment; after several moves it became, in 1857, the Staff College at Camberley. The Junior Department, for Officer Cadets, was a new venture.



Laboratory Work



The Library



In the Dining Hall

Sherry before Dinner



Old College itself was attractive enough to catch the eye of the Prince Regent, who proposed to take it over as a residential palace; the Cadets got there just ahead of him, in 1812. New Buildings, the second residential block, an impressive building of weathered red brick, was not completed till 1911.

The collegiate atmosphere of Sandhurst is perhaps brought out most clearly in the living conditions enjoyed by Cadets. There are the spacious dining-halls, where, on formal 'Band Nights', Cadets dine to the strains of Rossini or Strauss; the anterooms, with their deep leather armchairs and plentiful periodicals, remind one of any club. Psychologically perhaps the most important factor of all, every Cadet has a room to himself – except during his first term when he may share a double room with one other man.

There is nothing barrack-like about these rooms: often only a ceremonial sword or a pressed uniform on its hanger will distinguish them from those of any undergraduate. Easy chairs, table-lamps, built-in wash-basins, curtains, wardrobes, rows of books – all remind one that the Cadet is living an academic as well as a military life and is treated accordingly. He may, for instance, wear civilian clothes off-duty at any time after lunch – or to evening lectures.

Sandhurst takes a great pride in its distinguished tradition: that accumulated spiritual inheritance of courage, self-sacrifice, and *noblesse oblige* that forms the unspoken centre of a Cadet's training today. The visible memorials of that tradition are displayed everywhere. In the high white-raftered Library, portraits of famous soldiers look down from the walls, and on the V.C. Roll of Honour are seen names known and honoured throughout the land, such as that of Colonel Carne of the Gloucesters. Wellington's handwritten – and enviably brief – Order of The Day before Torres Vedras is shown here; in the annexe, above a special library of 8,000 books on all aspects of military history, hang swords and lances used at Balaclava. Yet the main library is far from being purely military; English literature and philosophy,

a distinguished regiment or corps; there could be no more impressive testimonial to the loyalty and pride the R.M.A.S. calls out from its members.

III

THE COURSE – MILITARY AND ACADEMIC

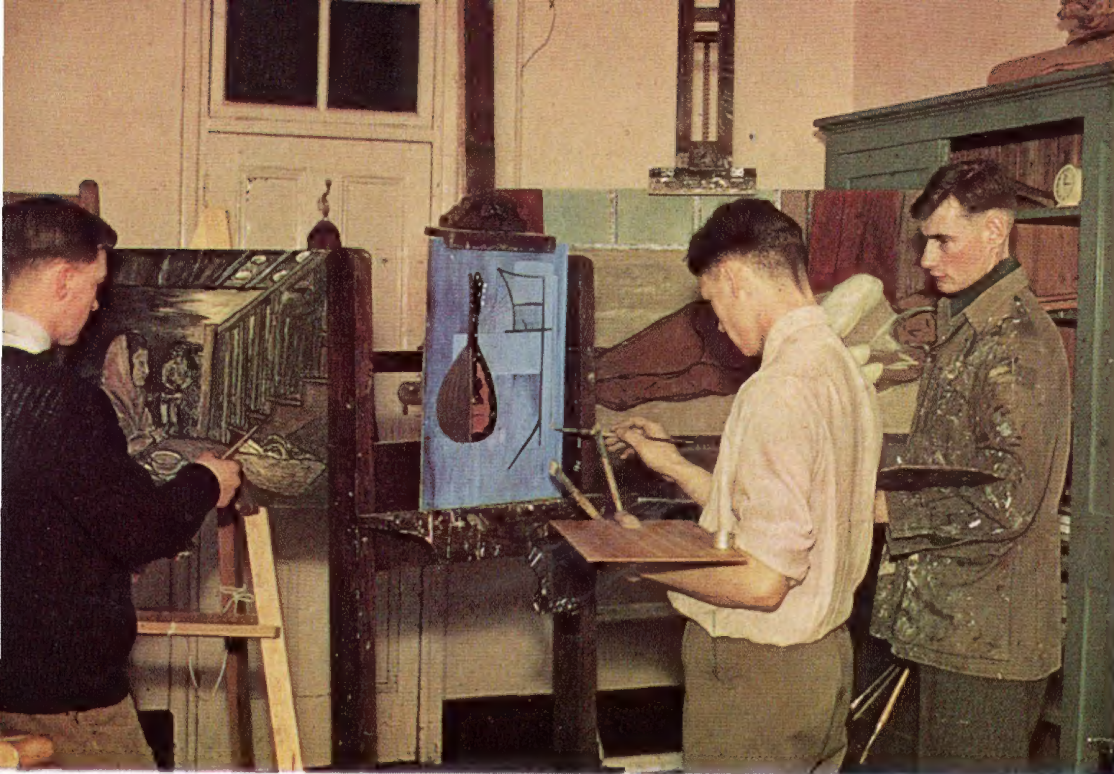
The R.M.A.S. Charter

‘The object of all training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst’ – so runs the Charter – ‘is to produce a young officer with a sound education in appropriate military and academic subjects, with a wide interest in the current problems of world affairs, and the enthusiasm to continue to increase his knowledge by his own initiative. He will be firmly grounded in the British Army Officer’s traditional code of behaviour, responsibility and reliability, and his powers of leadership will have been developed. He will thus have been brought to the stage in military and academic subjects where, with the addition of Special-to-Arm training, he is fit to command a platoon or equivalent sub-unit.’

It is an impressive programme, and there are six terms, of between twelve and thirteen weeks each, in which to complete it. Thus the Cadet must be prepared to work extremely hard and be as fit as constant sports and P.T. can make him; yet even so he is allowed five weeks’ leave in the summer – during a week of which he will attend Summer Camp – and eighteen days each at Christmas and Easter.

Organisation

Throughout his Sandhurst career the Cadet is evenly balanced between the military and the academic life, the mental and the physical, the active and the reflective. This programme is designed not so much to fill him with facts as to encourage him to think for himself; to bring out his own latent qualities. He is,



The Art Club

In an Officer Cadet's room



after all, to be an Officer; he must learn to command as well as obey. The Sandhurst motto, *Serve to Lead*, succinctly symbolises this attitude.

Cadets are organised into Colleges, called *Old*, *New* and *Victory*. Each College is divided into four Companies, each with its own commemorative name, ranging from Blenheim in *Old* College to Burma in *Victory* College. Each Company has three platoons, one for each intake except the Seniors who act as Under-Officers and Cadet N.C.O.s. College and Company spirit is strongly fostered, particularly in connection with the competition for the Sovereign's Company Trophy. The College is the essential unit as far as the military side of the Cadets' training is concerned. Under the College Commander, two teams of six Officer Instructors are formed from Company Officers, one team teaching Tactics and the other Administration. Thus College life and general military instruction are closely integrated. Specialist instructors unattached to Colleges teach such subjects as Weapon Training, P.T., and Signal Communications.

Academic instruction is organised somewhat differently. Each of the four Departments arranges its classes so that the Cadet finds himself grouped with men of about his own level of attainment in the different subjects that he studies. Classes are formed on an Academy intake rather than a College or Company basis. In addition to this the civilian lecturing staff is closely associated with the College and Company organisation. Heads of Departments and Principal Lecturers are attached as advisers to College Headquarters and every Senior Lecturer and Lecturer is attached to one of the Companies. In this connection lecturers act as 'Intake Tutors' and are responsible for seeing that each Cadet is correctly placed in his various classes, properly advised about the selection of studies, and in general enabled to get the best results from the academic side of his career. This arrangement typifies the individual consideration that every Cadet at Sandhurst receives throughout his training.

During his period of training every Cadet is given ample opportunity to distinguish himself – academically, on the sports field, by qualities of leadership and military knowledge. His general achievements in every branch of the course are assessed annually in an Order of Merit; and a high position in this Order can do a good deal to help him to be commissioned into the Arm and Regiment of his choice. He also has a chance to compete, not only for such distinctions as the Sword of Honour and the Queen's Medal, but for many prizes in varying subjects: Tactics, Military Law, Russian, Science, Military History and Physical Training, to mention but a few.

School and Army Entrants

For the candidate entering direct from school, who has already given proof of academic ability, the first term is devoted largely to military subjects – weapon training, drill, P.T., leadership, tactics, map-reading, organisation and administration. This may involve anything from throwing live grenades to walking five miles in an hour; from firing on the range to working out problems with models or acclimatising himself to night vision. At the same time the school candidate is given the opportunity, on the academic side, of specialising at once in Science (if he possesses the necessary qualifications; see page 23); or of taking the Main Course in Modern Subjects, less advanced Mathematics and Science, and a Language, which again will enable him to specialise at the end of his first year.

The Army entrant may, if he satisfies the examiner in his entry tests, be treated in the same way as the School entrant. If he is not up to this standard, however, he is given a concentrated course by specialist officers of the Royal Army Education Corps to enable him to pass the Army Entrants Examination (which is equivalent to the Civil Service Commissioners Examination) at the end of his first term.

Military Training

In whatever academic field the Cadet may specialise at the end of his first year, his military syllabus remains fairly constant throughout. However, Military History is not introduced till the fourth term, nor Vehicle Servicing and Military Law till the fifth; and during his second year considerably less time is spent on drill, weapon training, and P.T. When he is a Senior he will be exercising in command as an Under-Officer or Cadet N.C.O. the knowledge he has gained and the talents for leadership and personal initiative he has developed.

The backbone of the military course is Tactics, to which more than twice as many periods are allotted as to any other subject. The future Officer will learn of patrols and fieldcraft; how to command a platoon and infantry/artillery co-operation in attack and defence; the principles of infantry/tank co-operation; the role of armoured forces and the effect of nuclear weapons; mining and wiring – in short, every aspect of a young Officer's duties in action. In classroom or on exercises, he will all the time increase his own initiative and self-reliance, theoretically and practically.

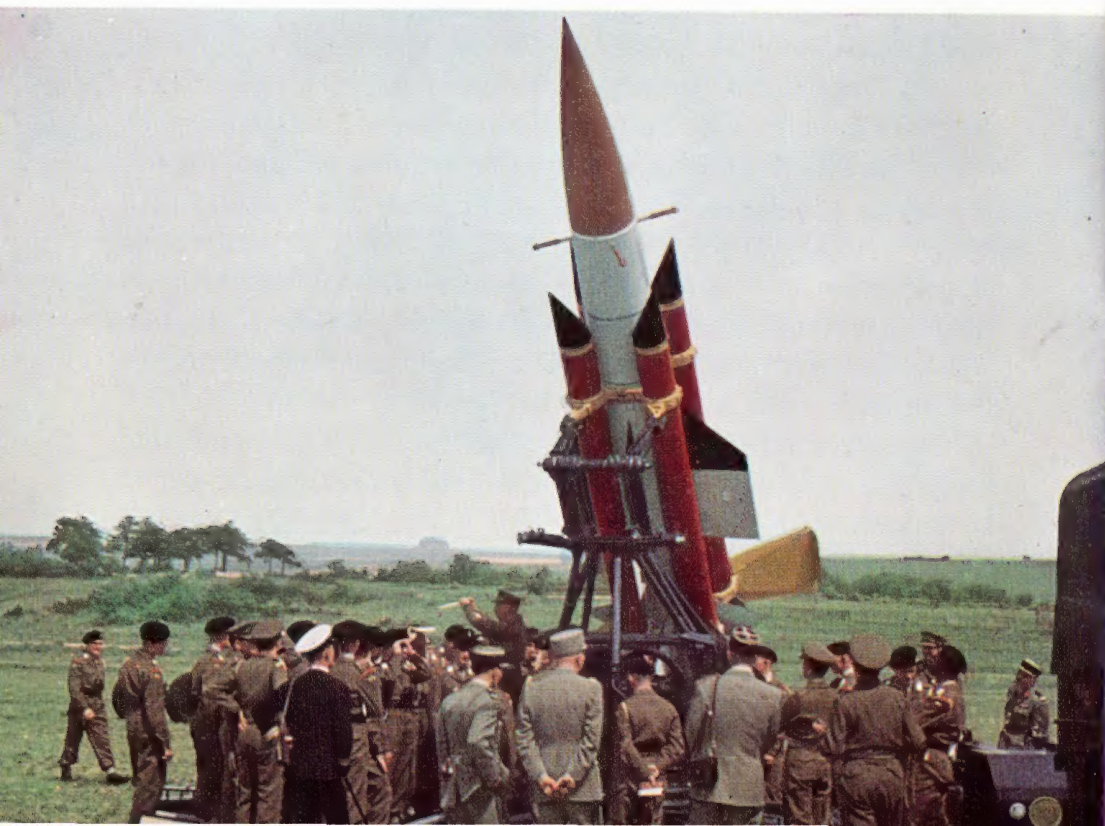
If Tactics teach him his duties in the field, Organisation ensures that he possesses the equally important knowledge of how the various Corps and Regiments of the Army function as a whole – and, incidentally, helps him to decide into which he wishes to be commissioned. Military Administration outlines not only his responsibility to his men, but to the public funds and property with which he will be entrusted; while Military Law gives him a sense of proportion and equity in the exercise of discipline. Weapon training and drill speak for themselves; drill reaches the highest standards and is taught by Warrant Officers and N.C.O.s from the Brigade of Guards and Infantry Regiments of the line.

A special word should be said about the study of morale and leadership qualities. Leadership is an intangible thing; it cannot be taught, only brought out where it already exists. Yet discussion always promotes clarity; and such famous documents as



New Buildings

Cadets examine a guided missile



Wellington's dispatches or Nelson's letters (which are studied in this context) remind us that, however far technical devices may develop, the human qualities of loyalty, leadership and discipline remain constant.

One subject in which all Cadets are particularly encouraged is Military History, on the principle that every Officer should know and appreciate the literature of his own profession. In this field ample opportunity is given for private study and research in the library; each Cadet elects to make a special study of either Alexander the Great, Marlborough, Napoleon, Nelson, Stonewall Jackson or Wellington. As Carlyle observed: 'no one is the worse for spending ten minutes in the company of a great man'.

Lastly, a little about Physical Training, which is, of course, closely integrated with games and sports. It is a *sine qua non* of military service that every Officer should attain a particularly high standard of physical fitness. Here, as in other fields, the Officer Cadet is taught to organise and conduct Physical and Recreational Training himself – whether it be a boxing tournament, a sports meeting, a team competition, or any kind of umpiring and refereeing. In the great gymnasium he will learn to climb ropes, vault horses, and – if he wishes – to fence; in his second term he will splash through the Wish Stream in the Junior Steeplechase; later he will swarm like a monkey up the ropes of the Obstacle Course, swinging among tree-tops, balancing neatly from hazard to hazard. Eventually, he will become a leader himself, trained in Battle P.T., agile and self-reliant. *Mens sana in corpore sano*; it is an old motto, but a good one.

Academic Training

The various alternative arrangements of courses on the academic side are designed so that Officer Cadets whose bent lies in 'Arts' subjects can find just as much scope as those whose interests are in Mathematics and Science.

During the first year there are two courses – 'Science' and

multi-racial societies. Both are primarily designed to give the Cadet an awareness of contemporary problems, to encourage him to 'form considered judgments as part of a sound liberal education', and – as in every other branch of the course – to develop his powers of self-expression, to lead him to think for himself and pursue his own inquiries into the world in which he lives. The Army Officer, in short, must also be a self-reliant citizen of his country.

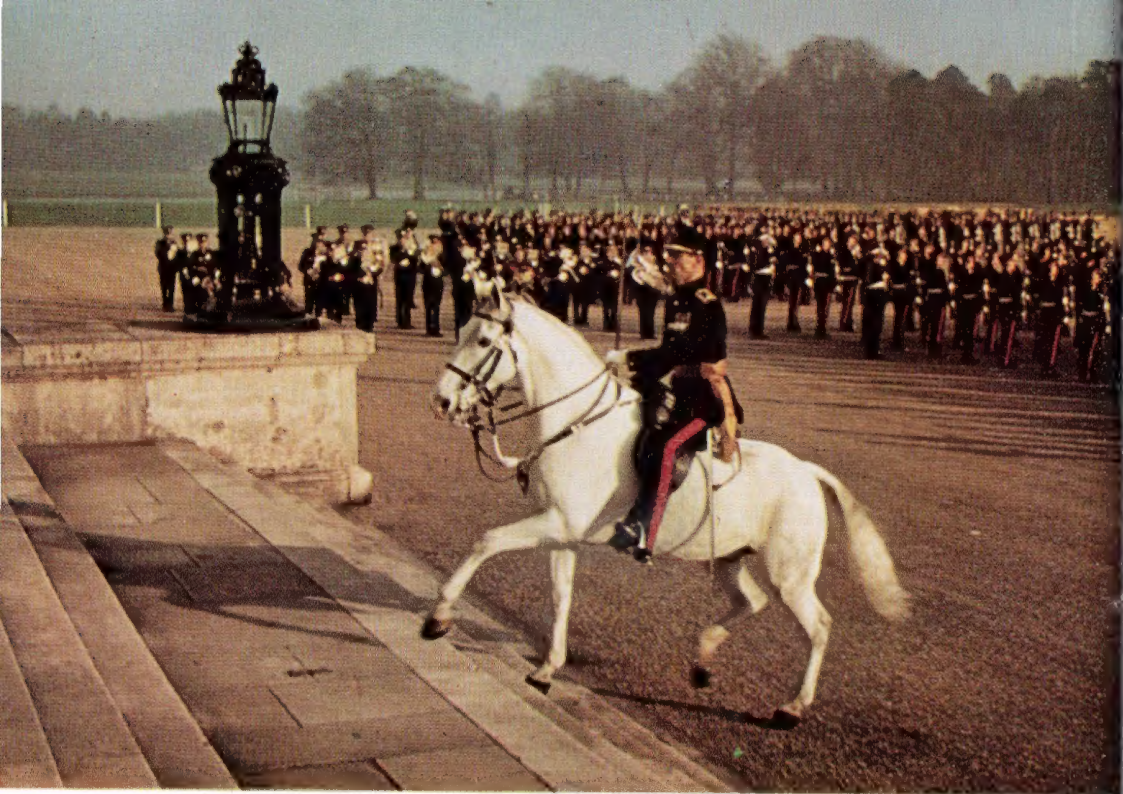
The scientist's studies are both practical and theoretical, but – inevitably – biased towards military requirements. During his two years' training he will work – both in Classroom and Laboratory – on Applied Electricity, Applied Heat, and Metallurgy; General Physics (such as Optics and Magnetism), Pure and Applied Mathematics (including Statistics and Mechanics). He has all the advantages of a Scientific and Mathematical Library, ten laboratories (devoted to Electronics, Physics, Electrical Machine Testing, Fuel and Explosives, Applied Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology) and of a self-contained Department, complete with all visual and other teaching aids, and much valuable equipment.

During his first year Main Course, the Modern Side Cadet will learn, besides Modern Subjects and one Language (usually French, German or Russian) such elementary Science as Energy, the Structure of Matter, and – particularly relevant to his profession today – the release and control of Nuclear Energy. At the end of this year he will know where his particular bent lies. If he chooses the Modern Course, he will continue the study of a Language, with the aim of reaching Preliminary Interpretership level; and he will choose an additional Modern Subject, to be selected from such titles as 'Political Thought', 'English Literature', 'Economics', 'Russia', or special periods of modern British or European history.

The Language Course is self-explanatory: its main purpose is to prepare Cadets 'for the full requirements of the Services Interpretership Examination'. At the same time military affairs are

related to the language (for example, sand-table exercises may be conducted in French), and books read are both adult and modern, ranging from de Gaulle's *Memoirs* or Saint-Exupéry's *Terre des Hommes* to Albert Schweitzer's *Leben und Denken*. General Courses – whatever combination of subjects is taken – blend elements of other courses at a slightly less advanced level.

The civilian lecturers on the Academic side – unlike their military colleagues, who are drawn in rotation from every branch of the Service and have a three-year appointment to the R.M.A.S. – form a permanent staff and do much to ensure the continuity of the Sandhurst tradition.



A Passing-Out Parade. Traditionally, the Adjutant rides up the steps into the Grand Entrance, shown below



IV

GAMES, SPORTS, AND EXTRA-MURAL ACTIVITIES

So far we have seen the Cadet only in his duty hours; but it would give a highly false impression of Sandhurst to suggest that he neither has time for relaxation nor the initiative to use his leisure intelligently. Few public schools or universities can equal Sandhurst for keenness or breadth of interest where sport is concerned. In addition to Rugger, Cricket, Hockey and Soccer, Officer Cadets can take up Squash, Swimming, Golf, Rackets, Rowing, Badminton, Boxing, or Athletics. There is no need to be an expert to play, there is almost as much enthusiasm to represent one's College or Company as to play for the Academy. For the devotees of field sports there are the Foxhounds and Drag, Beagles, Game Shooting and Fishing. For the horseman there are the Saddle Club, Polo, and Pentathlon. For the adventurous there are Parachuting, Gliding, Mountaineering, Exploration, Pot Holing, Canoeing or Sailing either in dinghies or in the Academy's own yawl. These are only a selection of the Clubs, run by the Cadets themselves, which cater for almost every known outside activity.

There are, besides, a remarkable number of 'indoor' Clubs. Bridge, Highland Dancing and Debating are only a few of the activities pursued; perhaps the oddest-named is the 'Polished Bun' Club – so called because of the refreshments provided – whose members discuss each other's papers on an endless variety of topics. Mirroring all facets of Sandhurst life is the *Wish Stream*, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst Journal.

In the face of such breadth of interest, so many intelligent pursuits, it becomes hard to maintain the old legend of the Regular



Officer as a narrow-minded, hide-bound, unintelligent martinet. Today he needs to be as alert, intelligent and politically aware as any citizen of this country; if the prospective Cadet cannot face the exacting demands made on him, he should choose a less responsible profession. Sandhurst asks the best; but it gives the best in return.

The information in this booklet, particularly in Part III, is subject to changes in regulations. While correct at the time of printing, it should be regarded as a guide only, and you should check with the War Office (PA 6), London, S.W.1, as to whether there have been any important changes since it was printed.

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